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To the Graduate Program:

This project, entitled “Creating a personalized learning content website to newcomers in fourth grade for reading and writing” and written by Andrey Vargas Ramírez, is presented to the Graduate Program of Greensboro College. I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts with a Major in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

Paula Wilder, Advisor

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Project and recommend its
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CREATING A PERSONALIZED LEARNING CONTENT WEBSITE TO
NEWCOMERS IN FOURTH GRADE FOR READING AND WRITING

Presented to
the Graduate Program
of
Greensboro College

In partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

by
Andrey Vargas Ramírez

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Advisor: Professor Paula Wilder

Abstract

Every day teachers and students face new teaching and learning challenges in search of better methods and practices to improve their experience in the classroom. Teachers apply different approaches and theories developed by many researchers to offer a good interaction between students and knowledge, but the implementation of these techniques does not always ensure a correct acquisition of learning. The use of these practices and methods has an important repercussion on all the students, but mainly on ELLs who struggle, not only with content, but also language. This paper presents a website as a tool to support teachers and students with teaching material and resources that will help ELLs develop their four language domains with a primary emphasis on reading and writing. Likewise, this website will guide teachers in the use of personalized learning as a teaching method to provide activities and resources adjusted to the students' needs, preferences, and learning styles.

Dedication

I would like to thank my family, friends, and colleagues for believing in me, and also, I want to thank myself because with the completion of this project I confirm that I am very talented, and I am able to assume new challenges with responsibility and self-confidence.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Paula Wilder, my advisor, for showing interest in my project and guiding me to complete this thesis. I would also like to thank all my professors and Dr. Michelle Plaisance during this journey for being very supportive and sharing all your knowledge and experience to continue enriching my academic and professional life.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

During my four last years living in the U.S. and working in a public school as an ESL teacher, I have noticed how the number of students and families from different countries has grown every year because they are in search of better opportunities and living conditions. According to Tippet (2017), North Carolina's Hispanic population is nearing 1 million, with 932,000 residents in 2016. Many children come to this country speaking only their mother tongue and with a low-level of schooling, which is not enough to have a good performance in U.S. classes. After they are enrolled in public schools, the students have to face new challenges such as a curriculum and lessons that are designed for native English speakers, standardized tests, non-adapted material, the new language, and much more that affect their self-esteem and success in class. In the same way, the teachers face another challenge to find good strategies, proper teaching practices, and effective communication to teach content and create a supportive learning environment to help these students succeed.

All of these new children are known as newcomers, who are children as talented as any other but with the language barrier as a significant obstacle. During my job as an ESL teacher, I have taught many of these learners and several times, I have seen how their teachers try to provide different options to make the content clearer and easier to understand, but it is not enough to help these newcomers to feel comfortable, smart, and capable. Likewise, these children are exposed to many English tests, long readings with many comprehension questions, and also much screen time with programs supposedly to

learn English but with zero effectiveness. However, many of these new learners experience a phase in their language acquisition processes where they are only listeners and are unwilling or unable to communicate verbally. According to Krashen (1982, as cited in Abukhattala, 2012), this phase is known as the silent period where students are reluctant to produce any original phrases, even though they are absorbing and understanding much of what is occurring around them.

For that reason, the project that I have created is based on Personalized Learning (PL) to demonstrate that education is not one-size-fits-all approach. Rickabaugh (2016) argued that instruction should be tailored to learning needs and connected with learners' interests, which I consider an important factor in any learning environment in order to shrink the gap between instruction versus interests. That is why my final project is the creation and design of a website for teachers and newcomers in fourth grade to provide teachers with tools to know about PL, learner profile, learning styles, and differentiated instruction, and also strategies to use in the classroom to deliver quality instruction, and finally, resources to print or use online during instruction time that will benefit all students in the classroom.

Additionally, the present project visualizes the realization of one unit plan focused on reading and writing with three lessons where newcomers will find better interaction with the new language and content. This unit will be aligned with the WIDA can-do descriptors, K-12 NC standards, and also focused on two language domains: reading and writing at the Level 1 Entering. Furthermore, the activities for each lesson plan will be designed for visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic learners taking into account their skills, likes, and interests.

This website can be used in the classroom or at home, and it has the intention to guide teachers throughout the lessons to help new learners process information, learn vocabulary, produce single words and short sentences in an oral and written way. Moreover, as I mentioned before, teachers will become better learning facilitators and find different tools to capture the students' attention by making their learning more attached to their interests, needs, preferences, and strengths.

Bray and McClaskey (2017) stated that PL helps learners become more motivated to learn, to show what and how they want to learn, and also how they want to express what they learn. In this respect, the use of PL lets teachers see each learner as a whole entity with vast possibilities and capacities, where the classrooms can be a lab to interact, experiment, produce, create, design, and fail, thus promoting more practical and authentic knowledge.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Every year new English language learners (ELLs) with different social, cultural, and/or economic backgrounds are enrolled in U.S. public schools and exposed to a new language, culture, and school system that presents academic and social challenges not only for students, but also for teachers (Hill & Flynn, 2006). According to Calderon and Minaya-Rowe (2011), there is a wide diversity of ELLs where many of them were born in the United States and have developed conversational language skills in English but their academic proficiency is underdeveloped. These children need to develop conversational and academic English quickly in order to increase their chances of success in school. Likewise, some students display content gaps because of irregular schooling or social and political conflicts that have taken place in their home country, which represents an obstacle to meet their academic goals and fit in the American school system (Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011).

Consequently, new educational models aim to innovate old teaching practices to support all the students no matter their current conditions. Presently, there are many theories, principles, strategies, methods, and approaches in language teaching and acquisition. For instance, Krashen and Terrell (1983) found effective ways to support students in their language acquisition. One of these ways is the need for ELLs to have a verbal production at a suitable level where they can hear and understand information in the target language and build vocabulary before being asked to produce spoken language. In the same way, Collier (1995) created a conceptual model of language acquisition

identifying four important components: sociocultural, linguistic, academic, and cognitive processes. These components have a significant influence in language acquisition since they take into account important elements, such as the context of the students, the instructional environment in the classroom, the formal teaching of language in school, language domains, academic and conceptual knowledge in all teaching areas, and the cognitive dimension that supports that language learning that cannot be isolated from the students' context and interests (Collier, 1995).

In addition, Herrell and Jordan (2004) mentioned the importance of creating good learning environments to support children's language acquisition where the students have better opportunities to interact with the language and provide genuine reasons to produce authentic phrases. Together with this theory, the effects of emotions on learning have an important role in learners' development. When the students are exposed to stressful situations and high levels of anxiety, their capacity to produce spoken language is affected, and as a consequence, the students' motivation and self-esteem are reduced (Krashen, 1982).

In effect, there are many theories about language teaching and how they should be adapted to the students' needs, likes, and interests. For instance, Rickabaugh (2016) found that the traditional system of education works for some students and asserted that this system was designed to implement the same learning experience for everyone in the class at the same time and pace. Moreover, teachers spend much time on planning, delivering lessons, and setting goals no matter the students' expectations. In the same way, Rickabaugh (2016) stated that our current society needs an educational system that equips all students with a strong academic base to be able to assume changes, think

creatively, analyze problems critically, and conceive learning as something personal (Rickabaugh, 2016). Besides, due to the necessity to transform old teaching practices, new scholars research about personalization, individualization, and differentiation to “place the learner at the center as an individual who is able to drive his/her own learning to become a self-directed, independent learner” (Bray & McClaskey, 2017, p. 1). As a result, these methods of learning give a better perspective with significant ideas about their benefits, not only for teachers, but also for students and contribute, as an important factor to develop better teaching practices in ELLs within the framework of personalized learning.

Personalization

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education defined personalization as instruction that is designed considering learning needs, preferences, and specific interests of learners where the content, learning objectives, method, pace, and environment are totally personalized to promote more effective learning. In addition, Rickabaugh (2016) remarked that learners have an important role in “planning, developing, demonstrating, and applying their learning which develops greater self-efficacy, ownership and learning independence” (p. 151). Personalization encourages teachers to be more open and flexible and empowers students to manage their own education promoting a new dynamic between teachers and students (Grant & Basye, 2014). Likewise, the kind of relationship that teachers can establish with students by applying personalization is vital to create a great impact on academic, social, behavioral, and emotional levels to advocate for positive connections, low levels of conflict and high levels of warmth (Yonezawa, McClure, & Jones, 2014).

Moreover, Bray and McClaskey (2017) stated that each student “becomes a self-directed, expert learner who monitors progress and reflects on learning based on mastery of content and skills” and pointed out important elements that support this belief and benefit learners through a personalized environment. For instance, when teachers create an atmosphere of personalization the learners are able to drive their own learning, connect what they learn with their interests and passions, take responsibility for their learning, set goals and acquire the skills to use appropriate resources, and build better connections with their teachers and peers to support their learning. As a consequence, students will feel more motivated and engaged, which benefits their interaction with peers, motivation, participation, work in class, and acquisition of knowledge (Bray & McClaskey, 2017, p. 9).

Individualization

Basye (2018) defined individualization as instruction designed to meet the unique pace of diverse students; in other words, the same learning goal is set for all students, but they can progress through the curriculum at different speeds and based on their own needs. Furthermore, all the strategies used in individualization are based on student eagerness, interests, as well as best practices. Additionally, Zmuda, Ullman, and Curtis (2015) stated that with this model of education “the student is in charge of the pacing rather than the content or product,” controlling his/her own working pace as well as when to show mastery (p. 9). Likewise, for the learning environment, it is crucial to create spaces to facilitate better teaching practices by identifying students’ needs through evaluations focused on their strengths or weaknesses to help teachers adapt materials and instruction for each individual learner. When teachers individualize learning the

objectives set are the same for all the students; however, some specific goals can be set differently for those students who need more support and supervision (Bray & McClaskey, 2017).

Differentiation

According to Blaz (2006) differentiated instruction seeks to create an instructional and learning environment that provides better learning outcomes. Equally important, the author recognized that relevant information about each student, such as learning styles, interests, and prior knowledge, help teachers design challenging instructions and methods that enable creative learning environments and more encouraging activities. In a similar fashion, in a differentiated classroom, teachers must be ready to engage students in adapting different learning methods “by appealing to a range of interests, and by using varied rates of instruction along with varied degrees of complexity and differing support systems” (Tomlinson, 2014, p. 4). When teachers differentiate instruction, they are allowing students to strengthen their learning skills and also are ensuring that all students are receiving adequate guidance to meet their academic goals. According to Baecher, Artigliere, Patterson, and Spatzer (2012), differentiation is based on students’ learning styles and preferences, which demands that teachers modify their lessons to provide access to content learning and improve learning activities with a variety of elements and strategies to be implemented in a classroom to empower and facilitate learning. Consequently, teaching methods like personalization, individualization, and differentiation provide specific features focused on students’ abilities and dexterity. For this reason, personalized learning will be a fundamental method to develop this project to

create more teaching scenarios and procedures that benefit both teachers and ELLs (Baecher et al., 2012).

Personalized Learning (PL)

Dewey (1983) stated that education in most schools maintains a traditional classroom setting focused on the implementation of the Common Core standards, standardized tests, and state exams. Furthermore, this kind of education imposes adult standards, subject matter, and methodologies that are not tied to students' interests or needs (Dewey, 1983). In contrast, PL is an approach to learning and instruction that is created taking into account learners' willingness, abilities, needs, and interests. Furthermore, learners participate in establishing goals, planning learning routes, tracking progress, and choosing how they want to demonstrate learning. In the same way, learning objectives, methods, content, and pacing are different for each learner promoting a personalized environment that allows better performance in class (Rickabaugh, 2016).

According to Sharples (2006), the customization of education represents an important advancement that recognizes learners as individuals with their own interests and needs. This has a positive influence on their motivation due to the connection between what they are learning and what they really want to learn. In addition, the creation of a personalized environment is crucial in recognizing that "students' interest and abilities should be engaged in authentic activities to promote the learning of content area standards" (Grant & Basye, 2014, p. 4). Also, teachers should become facilitators and let the students take control of their learning by promoting critical thinking, and creativity skills to make their learning meaningful and useful.

Another important point, in terms of personalization or customization, is the fact that students have different types of intelligence and also have a great ability to learn depending on how they are receiving and interacting with knowledge. In his major study, Howard Gardner (1993) formulated a theory about Multiple Intelligences (MI) arguing that learners have particular gifts and talents that can be maximized by providing learning activities that promote the strengthening of those talents (Gardner, 1993). These eight types of intelligence are:

- *Logical/mathematical* related to our ability to work with numbers, understand patterns, and reason critically.

- *Verbal/Linguistic* related to our ability to read, write, and talk to others.

- *Visual/Spatial* is the ability to create a visual image or idea and then act on that vision.

- *Naturalistic* is the ability to have a great sensitivity to the natural world and distinguish among nature's different features.

- *Musical/Rhythmic* is the ability to compose songs, sing, and play instruments.

People with this intelligence are more sensitive to sounds than others.

- *Bodily/Kinesthetic* is the ability to use one's body skillfully or as a medium of expression to solve a problem.

- *Interpersonal* is the sensitivity one has towards others along with their ability to work well with and understand others.

- *Intrapersonal* is the ability to understand, work, and communicate with yourself as opposed to other people. (Gardner 1993)

Gregory and Burkman (2012) suggested that MI work as “delivery routes” (p. 52) to personalize relevant cognitive and emotional processes in terms of “attention, memory, motivation, creative cognition, problem-solving, and understanding” (p. 52). Equally important, the creation of a learner profile will allow teachers to find methodologies and resources to motivate students, and also the most convenient materials and strategies to deliver personalized instruction based on students’ preferences (Shearer, 2018, p. 4).

Similarly, Bray and McClaskey (2017) provided a series of steps to personalize learning and also included a recommendation for how to design an engaging learning path. Bray and McClaskey (2017) showed the importance of helping students to see themselves as learners and discover how they learn best and what they are interested in through short conversations, which can identify the students’ strengths, challenges, preferences, and needs. Secondly, Bray and McClaskey (2017) also supported the creation of the learner profile taking into consideration the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (CAST, 2018), which is a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning. UDL provides a structure for creating objectives, procedures, resources, and evaluations, and also provides guidelines for teachers to help them increase the levels of support and meet the needs and interests of students. Finally, Bray and McClaskey (2017) described how to create a personalized learning plan to support each learner in developing independent learning, skills, and personal goals.

According to Schiro (2012) and his analysis of Dewey’s (1983) work, children must be viewed as unique individuals and educators must be able to develop spaces where they can construct knowledge by promoting learning-by-doing and solving problems through hands-on approaches. Likewise, it is necessary to take into

consideration students' interests when planning in order to integrate them into classroom projects and make learning meaningful and useful (Schiro, 2012).

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2011) mentioned that the purpose of PL is to make the curriculum as attractive and relevant as possible by providing several options that can persuade students with different readiness levels, interests, cultural backgrounds, intelligence preferences, and learning styles. However, it is important to clarify that PL does not mean the teacher creates a different lesson plan for each learner, but instead ensures enough adaptability of instruction, activities, and assessment to facilitate a diverse group of learners to find a good fit most of the time (Tomlinson & Allan, 2000).

Additionally, Pink (2009) mentioned the importance of purposeful meaning as a vital resource in order to help students realize that their learning serves as a valuable target and to see how those targets become challenging instructions to retain what they learn. Also, students in personalized ecosystems with meaningful content are able to describe what they learn and establish connections with their prior knowledge (Rickabaugh, 2016). Another relevant aspect related to personalized ecosystems is the level of effectiveness that each learner is able to achieve. Bandura (1986) stated that students are able to take learning risks and persist when they see themselves as capable of overcoming learning challenges. Moreover, students with a strong feeling of efficacy tend to blame failure on a deficient strategy or lack of effort rather than insufficient knowledge when they do not succeed (Dweck, 2006).

Educators and learners are an important part of PL. However, a K-12 school district has an essential role in this process and must find different ways to promote

conditions that support the scaling of PL. The KnowledgeWorks Foundation has identified 10 requirements for scaling efforts to succeed:

1. The curriculum must be aligned to the vision for teaching and learning, and the standards and target learnings should be easy for students to understand.
2. The instructions should be focused on teaching students how to learn, shifting from a teacher-led to a student-led model while maintaining rigor and significance.
3. A comprehensive assessment should be aligned for teaching and learning including formative, interim, and summative assessments.
4. Designing learning environments should support students' learning with equity and inclusiveness.
5. Districts should provide support and interventions for students to succeed, and also grant flexibility to manage the time according to students' needs.
6. Districts should offer professional development aligned to the vision of teaching and learning and foster a culture of continuous collaboration.
7. Districts should create a leadership development program to train leaders at the classroom, school, and district level.
8. Schools should establish a technology policy that allows safe access to the internet at all times.
9. Curriculum coaches should create a comprehensive data system to be able to track assessment activities, teacher comments, supports, interventions, and student information.

10. Districts should establish partnerships with businesses, communities and higher education to create different learning opportunities. (Williams, Moyer, & Jenkins, 2014, p. 4)

All of these requirements will ensure better work and interaction among districts, educators, and students by promoting the right conditions to support the scaling of PL. Furthermore, districts and educators will ensure good learning practices to improve instruction, techniques, teaching methods, and procedures to meet, not only the students' goals, but also to meet the teachers' and schools' goals.

Finally, Bray and McClaskey (2017) stated that PL involves the creation of a culture of learning where schools care about everyone in the community and allow students and teachers to understand the relationships between individual needs and school practice. Likewise, the creation of a learning environment should bring spaces of participation, learning opportunities, and engagement by nurturing positive school culture and projecting teachers as good leaders in the classroom.

Conclusion

In conclusion, helping ELLs become successful students is a challenge for teachers and administrators who struggle with educating nontraditional students and demands more effort in terms of resources, teaching techniques, methodologies, and materials in order to guide an effective learning process. Likewise, newcomers represent a major challenge due to their lack of fluency in English and often in their native language, and also show a common tendency to isolate themselves in their culture and language affecting their performance in class (Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011).

Using personalized learning promotes best teaching practices by selecting optimal acquisition techniques, providing a variety of learning resources, granting comprehensive and appropriate professional development, and identifying the students' needs and interests to help them become critical thinkers and reach high levels of cognitive development (Bray & McClaskey, 2017). Furthermore, when schools and teachers create an environment of personalization, students receive real and contextualized information that makes the learning of English more relevant and meaningful. Additionally, all of these learning and teaching materials are adapted according to the students' needs to promote relevant content and to meet the needs of individual students.

Chapter 3: Project Design

The current system of education works well for some students and not at all for others. Furthermore, not all students can learn with the same strategies, activities, and with the same routine during the whole school year (Rickabaugh, 2016). On the contrary, education should find different alternatives and practices that promote better teaching delivery, learning styles, effective instructional time, and principally an education that considers students' interests, preferences, and needs. In my experience as a teacher, I have noticed how a majority of English language learners (ELLs) struggle with academic content due to their lack of language knowledge and adequate instruction. Likewise, I have seen how teachers try hard to support these students with more resources, but unfortunately not always this effort has a satisfactory result because the material or teaching practices implemented are not adapted to the student's needs and capacities.

Based on this experience and some observations made at the school where I am working, I have decided to create a website for teachers and students to provide more educational tools and resources that teachers and students can apply and use in the classroom or at home to have a better performance in class. Another important element for this project is the implementation of personalized learning as a teaching method that intends to guide teachers to know more about students in terms of likes, abilities, preferences, and context to facilitate learning.

The aim of this website is to help ELLs in fourth grade and teachers by providing better resources and lesson plans adapted to their needs. However, the content hosted on

this website will be mainly focused on newcomers who face a big challenge and who really need more support to succeed. In the same way, this webpage will have one unit plan with three lessons that will contain activities to develop the four language domains with a special emphasis on reading and writing. Likewise, this unit will be aligned with the WIDA Can Do descriptors at Level 1 Entering to provide better language foundations and increase the ability and interaction with the second language (WIDA, 2012). The activities planned for each lesson plan will be designed for visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic learners to create more learning opportunities that are adapted to their skills, interests, and needs. Also, teachers will be able to print and use a variety of resources provided on this website to promote engaging and encouraging learning environments to help students see language as a bridge to communicate with others and as an opportunity to succeed.

Another important aspect to be mentioned is that this website will help teachers to set a personalized environment with a series of steps about how to personalize learning. This begins with a short guided reflection for each student about who they are as learners. The next step is how to create a learner profile based on students' strengths, challenges, interests, talents, aspirations, preferences, and needs. Then teachers will know how to design a personal learning pack to select suitable apps, tools, resources, learning skills, strategies, and learning goals. Finally, teachers will establish a personal learning plan for each student to set learning, personal, and academic goals (Bray & McClaskey, 2017).

Wolf (2010) stated that "personalized learning requires a leveraging of modern technologies, which help track and control the learning needs of all students and provide a platform to access engaging content, resources and learning opportunities needed to

meet each students' needs" (p. 6). That is why my project will count as a good technological and educational resource for students and teachers to promote interactive tasks, work in groups, and hands-on activities. Also, this website will provide a friendly way to work independently or guided by their teachers to support students' learning and encourage better teaching and learning practices in the classroom. Likewise, teachers will find suitable resources sorted by learning styles and by the information obtained from the learner profile to provide adequate performance in class, feedback, and better teaching delivery.

Finally, the lessons provided on the website will give teachers different alternatives and options to integrate content and make it understandable. Moreover, these unit plans will be organized, designed and adapted according to students' learning skills, interests, and their English proficiency level to foster good language acquisition.

Chapter 4: The Website

The present project is the design of an educational website to support teachers and students in the implementation of personalized learning as a teaching method. Likewise, this website will host four important elements to understand how to personalize learning, and also how to apply this method in our teaching practice. Furthermore, it is important to mention that the research developed by Bray and McClaskey (2017) takes an important role in this project because some of their techniques about personalization have been adapted to make them more appealing and easier to understand not only for students but also teachers.

The name of the website is Personalized Learning and the web address is www.mylearningplace.com (See Figure 4.1: Home).

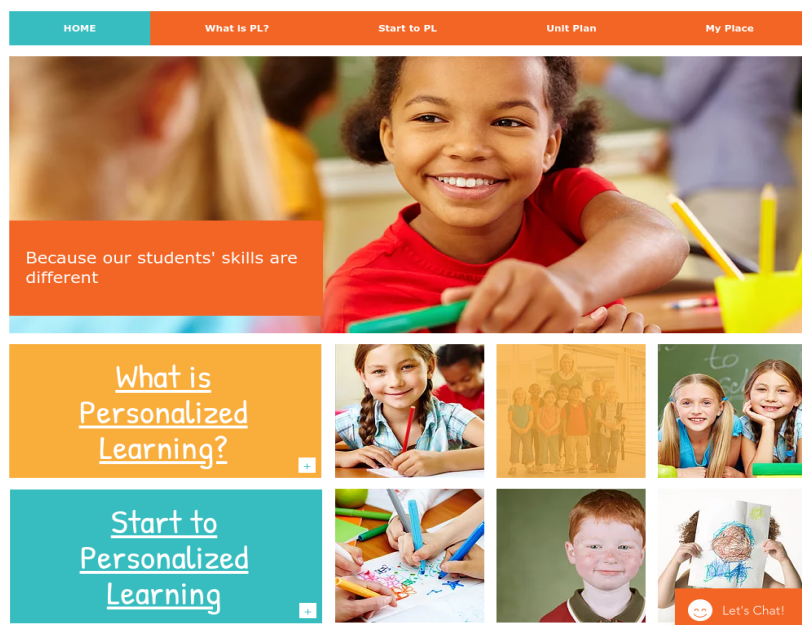


Figure 4.1: Home

In the main menu, teachers will find four links to know more about personalized learning, how to implement personalization, and also they will find a unit plan with three lesson plans as a model to personalize instruction and provide students with better opportunities to express what they know.

In the first link called **“What is PL?”** (See Figure 4.2: What is PL?), there are three short videos about talented boys and girls to inspire teachers to see in each student a person with different capacities and dexterities. Also, teachers will find brief information about personalized learning and the benefits for students when the activities and instruction are designed taking into account students’ needs and preferences.

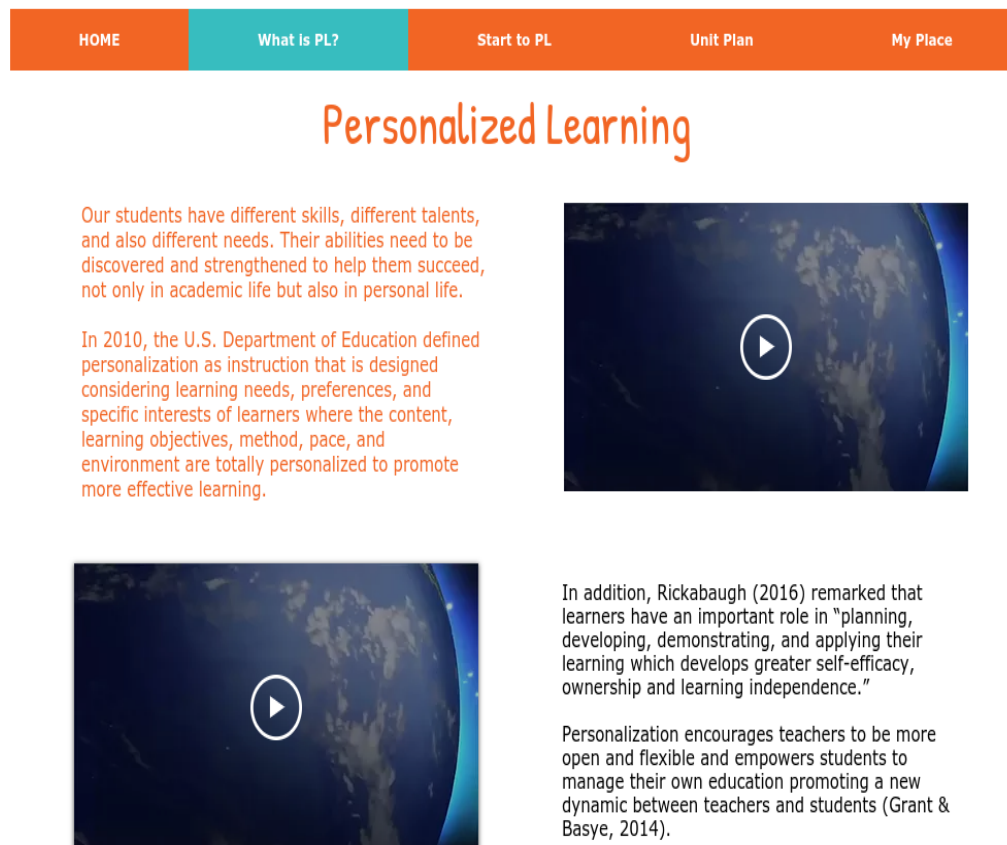


Figure 4.2: What is PL?

In the second link called **“Start to PL”** (See Figure 4.3: Start to PL), teachers will find five documents (See Figure 4.4: Surveys) to be applied to each student. These five instruments will work as friendly surveys to build the learner profile and have a closer idea about our students’ needs, preferences, strengths, and challenges. These surveys can be delivered in English or Spanish.



Barbara Bray and Kathleen McClaskey in their book "How to Personalize Learning" explain a series of steps about how students best access information, engage with content, and express what they know.

Here you will find some documents to be printed and applied to each student to know more about their interests, strengths, challenges, and preferences. These documents have been modified to be more appealing and easier to understand. These documents are available in Spanish too for newcomers.

Figure 4.3: Start to PL

The first document is the **“Who I am as a learner”** survey (See Figure 4.5: Who I am as a learner). This survey will guide the teachers to know more about their students, their likes, what they are good at, what they like to do at school, what they find fun and interesting. Moreover, this survey will be a friendly talk to each student to create a supportive environment and demonstrate that the voice learner has an important place in his/her own learning.

The second document is the “**Access**” survey (See Figure 4.6: Access). This survey will give to the teachers a better idea about how students like to access information, how they like information is presented, and also what challenges face students at the moment to access new content.

The third document is the “**Engage**” survey (See Figure 4.7: Engage). This survey will provide the teachers with ideas about how students like to engage with content, what represents a major effort for the students and also what possible tools could be used in the future to engage students in different and more assertive ways.

The fourth document is the “**Express**” survey (See Figure 4.8: Express). This survey will equip the teachers with instruments to help their students express what they know in a way they can feel comfortable. Likewise, the students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge through different resources and learning environments provided by the teacher.

Finally, the fifth document is the “**My Learner Profile**” survey (See Figure 4.9: My learner profile). This document will be filled out by the teacher with the information already collected from the first four documents. With this evidence, the teacher will have key information about each student in terms of strengths, challenges, preferences, and needs. Moreover, the learner profile will be a relevant reference to design lessons that encourage the students to be more independent, and also include teaching practices according to their contexts, interests, and abilities.

Who I am as a learner

Who I am as a learner

My talents, interests, passions and aptitudes

My name is _____

I am really interested in _____

I like to do this in school _____

For fun, I like to do _____

If I could be anything unique in nature about me, that would be... _____

I am really good at _____

I would like to learn _____

I have created the words below that best represent me:

Creative	Leader	Artistic	Fast-paced
Curious	Quiet	Calm	Musical
Funny	Teamwork	Intelligent	
Social	Hardworking	Honesty	
Shy	Talkative	Unhappy	

First, apply the **"Who I am as a learner"** survey. This will be a friendly talk between the teacher and the students to know more about them, their likes and interests.

Access



ACCESS

Strengths	Challenges
I am good at listening	I have trouble seeing
I like to read	I often get lost or confused
I am very organized	I feel nervous
I like to use maps and charts	I read slowly
I am good at math	I am not very organized
I like to be helpful	I have trouble seeing
I am good at drawing	I get distracted easily
I can imagine what I hear	I cannot understand what I hear in English
I like to understand systems and details	I am uncomfortable asking for help

Tell a friend about what you are good at.
 Tell about how you help to learn and what helps you learn.
 List any books, technologies, or subjects you like to learn about.

After "Who I am as a learner", you will apply the **"Access"** survey to know how each learner likes to access information, and have more ideas about their strengths and challenges.

Engage



ENGAGE

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am curious and inquisitive • I learn something new every day • I have a sense of humor • I am willing to plan and think • I am an independent learner • I am a good listener • I am able to take risks • I am good at working with others • I manage my problem solving skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am very tired of the time • I have a hard time listening • I find people to be perfect • I don't like to study • I don't know how • I am afraid to ask for help • I am afraid to ask for help • I am afraid to ask for help • I am afraid to ask for help

Tell us what you think about what is difficult for you when learning

What are some ways you motivated to learn more?

Tell us how your background or ability can be used to engage in learning

Third, you will apply the **"Engage"** survey to know about your students' strengths and challenges to engage with content.

Express

[illegible]

This is the fourth step, you will apply the "Express" survey to

My learner profile

My Learner Profile



Name: _____

Date: _____

Activities	Strengths	Challenges	Personalized Goals
			
			
			

Write full description in:

Interests, Talents, and passions: _____

Reflections: _____

Finally, you will fill out "My learner profile" with

Figure 4.4: Surveys

Figure 4.5: Who I am as a learner

Who I am as a learner

My talents, interests, passions and aspirations

My name is _____

I am really interested in _____

I like to do this in school _____

For fun, I like to do _____

If I could tell others one thing unique or special about me, that would be ____

I am really good at _____

I would like to learn _____

I have circled the words below that best represent me:

Creative	Leader	Artistic	Focused
Curious	Quiet	Calm	Musical
Funny	Talented	Intelligent	
Social	Strong	Friendly	




Figure 4.5.1: Quien soy como estudiante

Quien soy como estudiante

Mis talentos, mis intereses y pasiones.

Mi nombre es _____

Estoy realmente interesado en _____

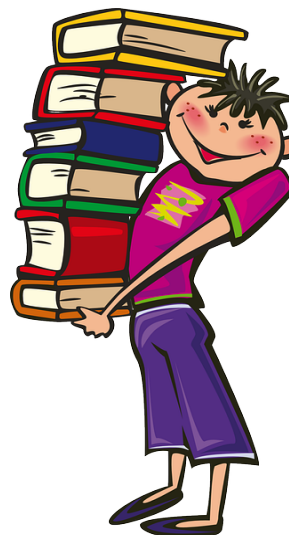
Me gusta hacer esto en la escuela _____

Para divertirme, me gusta hacer _____

Si pudiera contarle a otros algo único o especial de mi sería _____

Soy realmente bueno en _____

Me gustaría aprender _____



Encierra en un círculo las palabras que mejor te representen:

Creativo

Lider

Artista

Atento

Curioso

Callado

Calmado

Musical

Divertido

Talentoso

Inteligente

Social

Fuerte

Amigable

Tímido

Hablador

Buen escucha

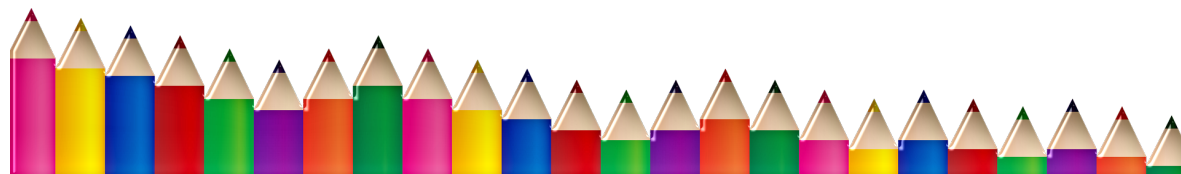


Figure 4.6: Access



ACCESS

Strengths

- ☐ I ask good questions
- ☐ I like to learn
- ☐ I am very organized
- ☐ I like to use maps and charts
- ☐ I understand what I read
- ☐ I learn by helping others
- ☐ I am good at drawing
- ☐ I can imagine what I hear
- ☐ I understand content with pictures

Challenges

- ☐ I have trouble seeing
- ☐ I often do not understand what I read
- ☐ I read slowly
- ☐ I am not very organized
- ☐ I have trouble focusing
- ☐ I get distracted easily
- ☐ I cannot understand or read in English
- ☐ I am uncomfortable asking for help


Tell a brief story about what you are good at _____

Tell about how you like to learn and what helps you learn _____

List any tools, technology, or apps you like to use to learn _____



Figure 4.6.1: Acceso



ACCESO

Fortalezas

- ☐ Hago preguntas
- ☐ Me gusta aprender
- ☐ Soy muy organizado
- ☐ Me gusta usar maps y cuadros
- ☐ Entiendo lo que leo
- ☐ Aprendo ayudando a otros
- ☐ Soy bueno dibujando
- ☐ Puedo imaginar lo que escucho
- ☐ Entiendo lo que leo a través de imágenes

Retos

- ☐ Tengo dificultad para ver
- ☐ A menudo no entiendo lo que leo
- ☐ Leo lentamente
- ☐ No soy muy organizado
- ☐ Se me dificulta concentrarme
- ☐ Me distraigo fácilmente
- ☐ No puedo leer o entender en inglés
- ☐ No me siento cómodo pidiendo

Escribe sobre aquello en lo que eres bueno _____

Cómo te gusta aprender y qué te ayuda aprender _____

Nombra aquellos elementos usados en el salón que te ayudan a aprender




Figure 4.7: Engage



ENGAGE

Strengths

- ☐ I like numbers and math
- ☐ I like learning new words
- ☐ I get tasks done on time
- ☐ I like talking and planning with others
- ☐ I am an independent learner
- ☐ I want to build things
- ☐ I like to lead others
- ☐ I manage my time well
- ☐ I work well with others
- ☐ I have good problem-solving skills

Challenges

- ☐ I worry most of the time
- ☐ I need help from teachers a lot
- ☐ I need things to be perfect
- ☐ I don't like to study
- ☐ I get bored fast
- ☐ It is difficult for me to focus
- ☐ I have a few friends
- ☐ I joke around when working
- ☐ I need directions repeated often
- ☐ I have trouble working with others

Tell a brief story about what is difficult or hard for you when learning _____

What helps keep you motivated to want to learn? _____

List any tools, technology, or apps you like to use to engage in learning

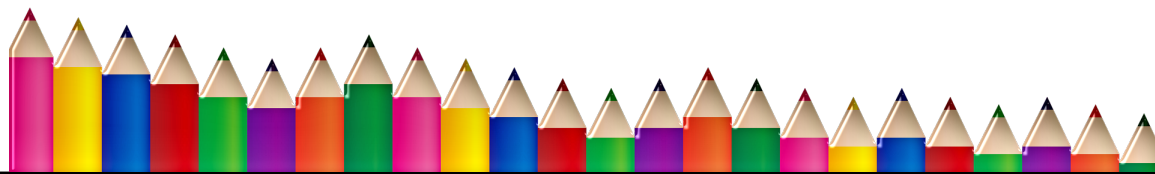


Figure 4.7.1: Participación



Participación

Fortalezas

- ☐ Me gustan los números y las matemáticas
- ☐ Me gusta aprender nuevas palabras
- ☐ Terminó mis deberes a tiempo
- ☐ Me gusta hablar y planear con otros
- ☐ Aprendo de manera independiente
- ☐ Me gusta construir cosas
- ☐ Me gusta ser líder
- ☐ Manejo bien mi tiempo
- ☐ Trabajo bien con otros

Retos

- ☐ Necesito que me repitan las indicaciones varias veces
- ☐ Necesito mucha ayuda del maestro
- ☐ Me gusta que todo quede perfecto
- ☐ No me gusta estudiar
- ☐ Me aburro con facilidad
- ☐ Me es difícil concentrarme
- ☐ Tengo pocos amigos
- ☐ Molesto mientras trabajo
- ☐ Me preocupa la mayoría de tiempo

¿Qué es difícil para ti cuando estás aprendiendo? _____


¿Qué te gusta hacer cuando estás aprendiendo? _____

Nombra aquellos elementos usados en el salón que te animen a aprender



Figure 4.8: Express

EXPRESS



Strengths

- ☐ I like using photos in my projects
- ☐ I like to build projects or models group
- ☐ I like to present in front of the class
- ☐ I am a good presenter
- ☐ I can draw what I am thinking
- ☐ I am good at telling stories
- ☐ I participate in class discussion
- ☐ I can create multimedia presentations
- ☐ I like to show evidence of my learning
- ☐ I use technology to communicate

Challenges

- ☐ It is hard to say what I am thinking
- ☐ I do not like to lead any group
- ☐ I can't take notes and listen at the same time
- ☐ I have trouble putting thoughts to paper
- ☐ I can't speak or present in English
- ☐ I can't organize my ideas
- ☐ I am not good at drawing
- ☐ I feel anxious talking in front of the

Tell a brief story about what is difficult or hard for you to express what you know _____

Describe how do you prefer to express what you know _____

List any tools, technology, or apps you like to use to express what you know _____

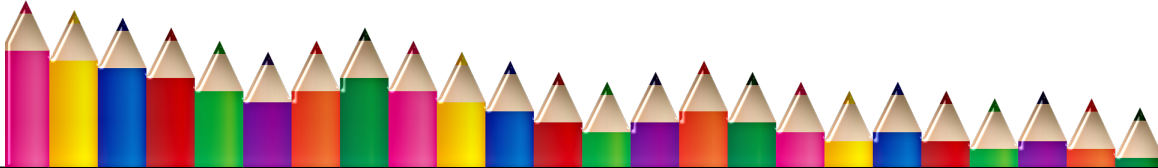



Figure 4.8.1: Expresar

EXPRESAR



Fortalezas	Retos
<input type="checkbox"/> Me gusta usar fotos en mis proyectos	<input type="checkbox"/> Es difícil decir lo que pienso
<input type="checkbox"/> Me gusta construir proyectos	<input type="checkbox"/> No me gusta liderar grupos
<input type="checkbox"/> Me gusta presentar en frente de la clase	<input type="checkbox"/> Es difícil escribir y escuchar al mismo tiempo
<input type="checkbox"/> Soy un buen presentador	<input type="checkbox"/> Se me dificulta escribir lo que pienso
<input type="checkbox"/> Puedo dibujar lo que pienso	<input type="checkbox"/> No soy bueno dibujando
<input type="checkbox"/> Soy bueno contando historias	<input type="checkbox"/> No puedo organizar mis ideas
<input type="checkbox"/> Participo en discusiones de clase	<input type="checkbox"/> Es difícil presentar y hablar en inglés
<input type="checkbox"/> Puedo crear presentaciones multimedia	<input type="checkbox"/> Siento nervios al hablar en público
<input type="checkbox"/> Me gusta mostrar evidencia de lo que aprendo	
<input type="checkbox"/> Uso tecnología para comunicar	

¿Qué se te dificulta cuando debes expresar lo que sabes?

¿Cómo prefieres dar a conocer lo que sabes? _____

Nombra aquellos elementos usados en el salón que te ayuden a expresar lo que sabes _____

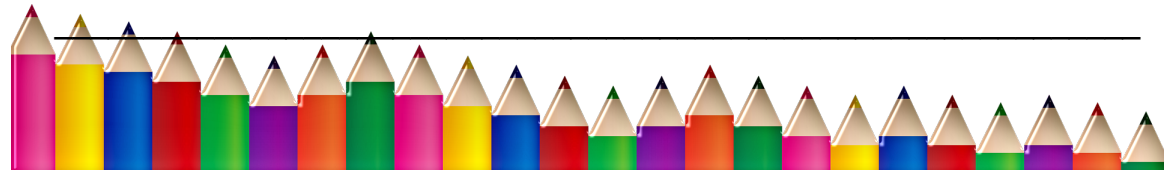





Figure 4.9: My learner profile

My Learner Profile



Name _____

	Strengths	Challenges	Preferences and Needs
Access 			
Engage 			
Express 			
Words that describe me... 			
Interests, Talents, and passions... 			
Reflections... 			

Teachers will find a third link called **“Unit Plan”** (See Figure 4.10: Unit Plan), this in a webpage where teachers could use three lesson plans to work in class and use personalized learning to deliver each lesson.

These lesson plans have been designed with activities and resources that promote more creative learning environments, and also activities that involve personalization to give the students more opportunities to interact and express their learning. Likewise, these lesson plans have three important components: Acces, Engage, and Express that will take the teachers to use different strategies and learning elements to support what is being taught. In the same way, these lesson plans apply the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Principles for teachers to create instructional methods and materials to meet the needs of all students (CAST, 2018).



Figure 4.10: Unit plan

The following lesson plans are already on the website www.mylearningplace.com and have all the worksheets and resources attached to be used in a regular classroom with ELLs and newcomers too.

THIS IS MY DAY	
Lesson Plan 1.0	
Daily Routines	
Participants	Fourth Grade
Length	45 min
WIDA Descriptor	<p>Reading Level 1 Entering Process recounts by + Identifying words in context during oral reading of illustrated text on familiar topics or experiences.</p> <p>Writing Level 1 Entering Recount by + Communicating personal experiences through drawings and words.</p>
Warm-up	<p>- The teacher will use TPR to teach action verbs with the students, this activity will help them understand the meaning of these words.</p> <p>These words can be written on the whiteboard: Walk, Sleep, Write, Jump, Read, Swim</p>
Access	<p>- The teacher will introduce the topic talking about his/her daily routine and use visual aids to help students understand.</p> <p>Materials: Slideshow Daily Routine Vocab Lesson Plan 1.0 Slideshow http://bit.ly/2Nxg0IC</p> <p>- The teacher will show a video about daily routines. The teacher will encourage the students to repeat the vocabulary and say it out loud.</p> <p>Materials: Kids Vocabulary YouTube http://bit.ly/2NzGn0t</p>

	<p>- The teacher will use the slide show again but this time the pictures are going to be labeled. The teacher will encourage the students to repeat the vocabulary and say it out loud by taking turns or the whole class.</p> <p>Materials: Slideshow http://bit.ly/2Nyg0IC</p>
<p>Engage</p>	<p>- The students will receive a worksheet with vocabulary related to daily routines, they will cut these pictures out and arrange the images according to their daily routine.</p> <p>Materials: Daily Routine Pictures Lesson Plan 1.0</p> <p>- The students will receive another worksheet related to daily routines but instead of pictures, it will have the names of the pictures. The students will work in small groups and label each picture with the right word. This will be glued in their notebooks.</p> <p>Materials: Daily Routine Words Lesson Plan 1.0</p>
<p>Express</p>	<p>Learning stations</p> <p>To personalized learning, students will work on different learning stations.</p> <p>Learning station #1 Chromebooks</p> <p>- The students will work in pairs, if there are newcomers they will work with another student who can support their learning. They will use their Chromebooks and visit the following websites to learn more about daily routines.</p> <p>Activity 1 http://bit.ly/2JKLhqe</p> <p>Activity 2 http://bit.ly/33geuRO</p> <p>Activity 3 http://bit.ly/34rzMMt</p> <p>Activity 4 http://bit.ly/2PHkGOP</p>

	<p>Learning station #2 Puzzle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students will work on a crossword puzzle with daily routines vocabulary <p>Materials: Daily Routine Wordcross Puzzle Lesson Plan 1.0</p> <p>Learning station #3 Pictures and clay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students will use the daily routine vocabulary and on a small board, they will mold with clay the name of the pictures. <p>Materials: Small board and clay</p> <p>Learning station #4 Act and say</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each student will have a set of cards with the daily routine vocabulary, one student will act the routine out and his/her classmates will show the right card that describes what he/she was acting. <p>Materials: Daily Routine Vocabulary Lesson Plan 1.0</p> <p>Learning station #5 Songs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some students will use their Chromebooks to listen to some songs related to daily routines <p>http://bit.ly/2NzGn0t</p> <p>http://bit.ly/33oe9N9</p> <p>http://bit.ly/2qttv4a</p> <p>http://bit.ly/2Nns0NV</p>
<p>Assesment</p>	<p>This will be a formative assessment where the teacher will evaluate participation, collaboration, work in a group, and individual work. It is important to continue taking notes about students' behavior and performance to adapt or modify some practices that are according to their needs.</p>

THIS IS MY DAY	
Lesson Plan 1.1	
Telling Time	
Participants	Fourth Grade
Length	45 min
WIDA Descriptor	<p>Reading Level 1 Entering Process recounts by + Matching illustrated words/phrases to casual and sequential language.</p> <p>Writing Level 1 Entering Recount by + Communicating personal experiences through drawings and words</p>
Warm-up	<p>- The teacher will use TPR to teach action verbs with the students, this activity will help them understand the meaning of these words.</p> <p>These words can be written on the whiteboard. Start reviewing the previous words (Walk, Sleep, Write, Jump, Read, Swim) and add six more (Run, Climb, Eat, Drink, Draw, Sing)</p>
Access	<p>The teacher will draw a digital clock (a rectangular box with a colon in the middle) on the whiteboard with no numbers. The teacher will say a time out loud and write it on the digital clock. After this example, the teacher will say another time and pick a student to write it on the board. Repeat this action with more students.</p> <p>Materials: Whiteboard or smartboard</p> <p>After this, the teacher will draw an analog clock on the board and give one small card to each student with</p>

	<p>different times. The teacher will explain how the activity works by using one card to draw the hour and the minute hand and mark the time.</p> <p>Materials: Time Cards Lesson Plan 1.1</p>
<p>Engage</p>	<p>The teacher will give a number from 1 to 12 to each student (if you have more than 12 students you can make another group). These 12 students will make a circle organized from 1 to 12 and two more students will be in the center of the circle being the minute and the hour hand. The teacher will say a time out loud and the two students in the center will lay down on the floor to mark the hour and the minutes.</p> <p>The teacher will repeat this action with more students to let them participate.</p> <p>Materials: Clock Numbers Lesson Plan 1.1</p>
<p>Express</p>	<p>Learning stations</p> <p>To personalized learning, students will work on different learning stations.</p> <p>Learning station #1 Time Bingo</p> <p>- The students will work in a small group playing time bingo. One student will say the time out loud and who has the time on his/her board will cover it with a chip.</p> <p>Materials: Time Bingo Lesson Plan 1.1</p> <p>Learning station #2 Matching Game</p> <p>- The students will place all the cards face down and taking turns they will turn two cards over. These two cards have to match the time in words with the time in the analog clock if the cards match, the student will leave them face up, if they're not the students will leave them face down again.</p>

	<p>Materials: Matching Game Lesson Plan 1.1</p> <p>Learning station #3 Cut and Paste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students will match the time in words with the time in the analog clock <p>Materials: Cut and Paste Lesson Plan 1.1</p> <p>Learning station #4 Movie Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students will think about their favorite movie and fill out a worksheet where they will draw a poster about the movie and also write three different showtimes to see it by using the analog clock and the digital clock. <p>Materials: Movie Time Lesson Plan 1.1</p> <p>Learning station #5 Online Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students will use their Chromebooks to visit different websites and work on time - telling the time <p>Materials:</p> <p>Activity 1 http://bit.ly/2p1AHEq</p> <p>Activity 2 http://bit.ly/2NTsXfQ</p> <p>Activity 3 http://bit.ly/2Q3yYJX</p> <p>Activity 4 http://bit.ly/2rpTr1d</p>
<p>Assesment</p>	<p>This will be a formative assessment where the teacher will evaluate participation, collaboration, work in group, and individual work. It is important to continue taking notes about students' behavior and performance to adapt or modify some practices that are according to their needs.</p>

THIS IS MY DAY	
Lesson Plan 1.2	
My Daily Routine	
Participants	Fourth Grade
Length	45 min
WIDA Descriptor	<p>Reading Level 1 Entering Process recounts by + Highlighting previewed or familiar phrases</p> <p>Writing Level 1 Entering Recount by + Reproducing a series of events through illustrated text.</p>
Warm-up	<p>- The teacher will use TPR to teach action verbs with the students, this activity will help them understand the meaning of these words.</p> <p>These words can be written on the whiteboard. Start reviewing the previous words (Walk, Sleep, Write, Jump, Read, Swim, Run, Climb, Eat, Drink, Draw, Sing). After this, the teacher will give to each student a set of cards with the vocabulary already learned. One student will go in front of the class to act one of those words out and his/her classmates will show the card that says what he/she is doing.</p> <p>Materials: Action Words Lesson Plan 1.2</p>
Access	<p>- The teachers will use a slideshow to talk about his/her daily routine and add expressions of time to make full sentences.</p> <p>Materials: Slideshow Daily Routines Vocab Lesson Plan 1.2</p> <p>http://bit.ly/36NdIhm</p>

	<p>- The teacher will use a video about daily routines and time.</p> <p>Materials: YouTube Video http://bit.ly/33vkB4Z</p>
Engage	<p>The students will make small groups. Each group will receive a set of words and pictures to make five right sentences related to daily routines and time. When the students have finished, they will glue them on construction paper and in front of the class each group will read the sentences.</p> <p>Materials: Scramble Sentences Lesson Plan 1.2</p>
Express	<p>Learning stations</p> <p>To personalized learning, students will work on different learning stations.</p> <p>The final product will be a poster, accordion book, slideshow or a comic where the students are able to write and talk about their daily routines.</p> <p>Learning station #1 Poster</p> <p>- The students will make a poster with drawings or magazine cuttings about their daily routines.</p> <p>Materials: Sticky Easel Pad, markers, colors, glue stick</p> <p>Learning station #2 Accordion Book</p> <p>- The students will create an accordion book about their daily routines</p> <p>Materials: Construction paper, tape, markers, colors, pencils. Video: How to make an accordion book http://bit.ly/2pVeWqc</p> <p>Learning station #3 Slideshow Lesson Plan 1.2</p> <p>- The students will use their Chromebooks to create a</p>

	<p>slideshow about their daily routines.</p> <p>Materials: Slideshow template and Chromebooks</p> <p>http://bit.ly/2Cp3YvQ</p> <p>Learning station #4 Comic Lesson Plan 1.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The students will create a comic about their daily routines <p>Materials: Comic page template, colors, markers.</p>
Assesment	<p>The teacher will evaluate each student's project taking into account their creativity, work in class, the right structure of the sentences and their final presentation to the class.</p>

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Every new school year, teachers and students face challenges, but these challenges are more difficult and require more effort for some English learners who have to learn a language and meet content learning goals without having any period of adaptation or transition that allow for better language acquisition. Throughout this project, I have been able to realize how important the role of the teacher is in the classroom. There are many theories about teaching and learning, but only teachers through their experience and expertise are really able to select the right teaching method or technique to use in the classroom.

When we talk about personalization, we are talking about the needs of each student, and also about their skills. Our students do not come to class with empty minds. On the contrary, they are full of knowledge, ideas, abilities, and stories that deserve an important place in their learning process. When teachers personalize learning, they are bringing more opportunities to create better environments where students can explore different alternatives to acquire knowledge and put it into practice. Likewise, when teachers use the tools to create the learner profile, they are building a trusting relationship to know more about their students and demonstrate that they are an essential element in the classroom.

Personalization does not mean more work for teachers, Personalization means more ways to be creative, innovative, and resourceful. Moreover, when teachers personalize their classrooms, they are providing different means to engage students with

content. Also, teachers are selecting better materials and resources for students and are implementing effective teaching practices to help students acquire knowledge.

During my four years here in the United States, working as an ESL teacher, I have seen that many of my students are very talented. They give extraordinary ideas when a new topic is introduced and also ask interesting questions related to what they are learning. Likewise, these children are very curious, spontaneous, and are waiting for classes that demand a major effort in terms of creativity and contextualized environments that bring their reality to their classrooms.

I hope that this project can give a better idea of how personalization works and also how to implement it in class. Every lesson and material used in this project was designed by taking into account my students' needs, likes, and skills to help them make their final product with more enthusiasm, readiness, and responsibility. Our students have an important role in education but we the teachers, are a fundamental part of their learning process. We need to know our students and provide more accurate teaching practices to promote a deeper interest in learning and better student achievement.

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